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Page : 2 of 9

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Amendments to the Specification:

Please add the following paragraph after the paragraph ending at page 11, line 3:

Flash evaporation can be achieved by an apparatus that comprises a vacuum chamber, at least one getter source and a heater to activate the getter source. The pressure in the vacuum chamber is reduced, such as to less than 10^{-4} Pa. The getter source and the substrate with the active components are aligned in the vacuum chamber such that a high percentage of evaporated metal is deposited on the active components and substrate. A distance H is provided between the substrate and the getter source. The distance H is preferably sufficient to prevent heat emitted from the getter source from damaging the active components or other components of the device. The getter source may be supported by a holder. In one embodiment, the getter source comprises a stable alloy of the alkaline earth metal, which is inert at room temperature and does not have to be handled in an inert atmosphere. For example, pure barium may be flash-evaporated from alloys of barium with other metals such as magnesium, aluminum, tantalum, thorium, strontium or calcium. In one embodiment, commercially available getters from companies, such as SAES Getters, are used. In one embodiment, the getter source comprises a wire filled with the getter alloy. Alternatively, other forms of getters such as rings or stirrups may be used. The getter source is heated up by the heater to the evaporation temperature (e.g., 1000 degrees Celsius). The time allowed for evaporation is typically 20-30 seconds. High evaporation rates of, for example, about 1000 Angstroms per second, may be achieved. For example, getter layers with thicknesses of 1-10 microns can be deposited in less than 60 seconds. Hence, tact time is advantageously reduced, improving the efficiency of the fabrication process.